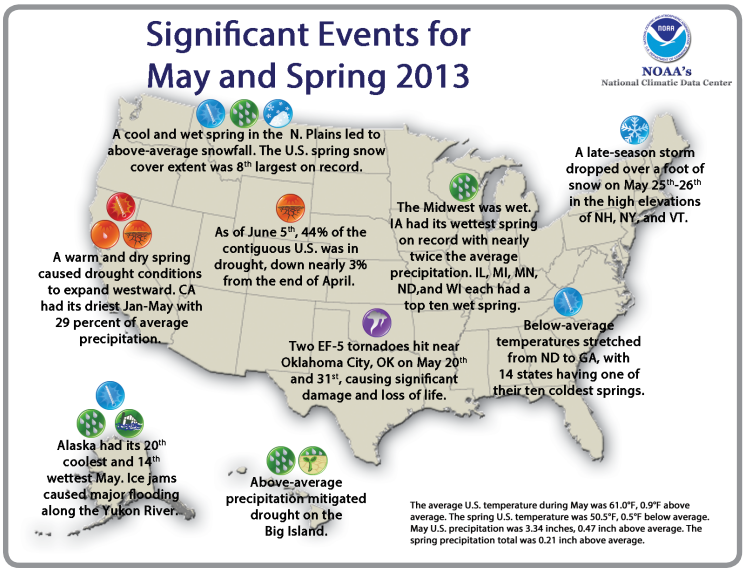
Quarterly Climate Impacts and Outlook

Alaska Region

June 2013

National - *Significant Events for March 2013–May 2013*



The western North Slope was the only area in Alaska to have a significantly warmer than normal spring, but persistent onshore winds during the first three weeks of May seriously delayed the start of the whaling season at Point Lay, Wainwright, and Barrow.

The coldest April since 1924 caused many spring activities to be postponed or cancelled in Fairbanks and the Interior. The cold persisted into May, resulting in an unusual concentration of returning summer birds in the upper Tanana Valley as areas to the north and west remained frozen and snow covered. Not everyone was unhappy though; ski season persisted into early May, and one lucky winner correctly guessed the record latest breakup of ice on the Tanana River on May 20 at 2:41 pm AKST, taking home $318,500 from the Nenana Ice Classic.

Snow April 6 and 7 in south central Alaska produced hazardous road conditions. Anchorage police reported more than 200 auto accidents, and the Glenn Highway near Eagle River was briefly closed so maintenance crews could sand the road. Tragically, snow from this storm caused icy roads in the Alaska Range and was a contributing factor to an auto accident on April 7 on the Parks Highway south of Cantwell that killed two people. A second storm impacted the area on the ninth, producing 5 to 10 inches of snow, with some schools in the Mat-Su Borough School District closed due to icy roads.

A strong storm on April 8 and 9 produced copious rains and higher-elevation snows along with locally gusty winds. Winds gusted to near 50 mph in parts of the Juneau area, causing localized power outages near Fritz Creek. In the southern Southeast, Annette measured a peak wind of 63 mph on the ninth.

Regional - *Climate Overview for March 2013–May 2013*

Alaska Seasonal and Subseasonal Anomalies

Season: **March–May 2013**

	Temperature (Standardized Anomaly)				Precipitation (1981–2010 Percentile Rank) Note: 0%=drier and 100%=wetter than any in 1981-2010 period			
	March	April	May	MAM	March	April	May	MAM
Barrow	1.3	-0.2	0.4	0.6	100%	72%	90%	100%
Bettles	-0.5	-1.9	-1.9	-2.2	71%	53%	0%	22%
Fairbanks	-0.7	-2.8	-1.5	-2.6	69%	91%	14%	48%
Northway	-0.6	-2.8	-1.5	-2.2	45%	61%	50%	41%
Nome	-0.3	-0.7	-1.2	-1.0	60%	26%	85%	72%
Bethel	-0.4	-1.6	-1.8	-1.7	68%	2%	2%	1%
Saint Paul	-0.2	-1.6	-1.7	-1.1	100%	8%	50%	82%
Cold Bay	0.2	-0.1	-0.5	-0.1	52%	58%	80%	62%
McGrath	-0.4	-1.8	-1.2	-1.8	45%	11%	0%	0%
Denali NP	-0.4	-3.2	-2.3	-2.8	93%	86%	29%	83%
Gulkana	-0.3	-2.8	-0.9	-1.8	76%	92%	81%	88%
Anchorage	-0.5	-2.4	-1.6	-1.8	92%	90%	97%	100%
Kodiak	-0.3	-1.7	-0.8	-1.2	37%	13%	17%	3%
Yakutat	-0.9	-2.1	-0.5	-1.5	20%	46%	100%	68%
Juneau	-1.2	-2.2	-0.3	-1.5	19%	99%	92%	91%
Annette	-0.5	-0.5	0.5	-0.2	10%	50%	71%	31%

Color fill closely corresponds to CPC terciles values (Temp s± 0.43 SD, Precip 33% & 66% percentiles from 1981–2010)

For the temperature portion of the graphic, red indicates above normal temperatures, and blue indicates below normal temperatures were observed. On the precipitation side, green indicates above normal precipitation was observed while yellow indicates below normal precipitation.

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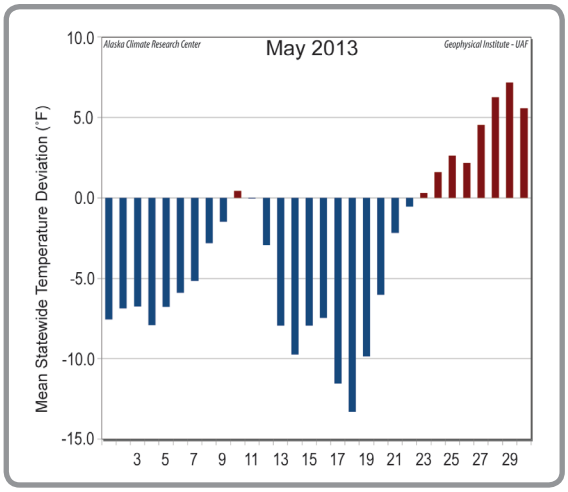
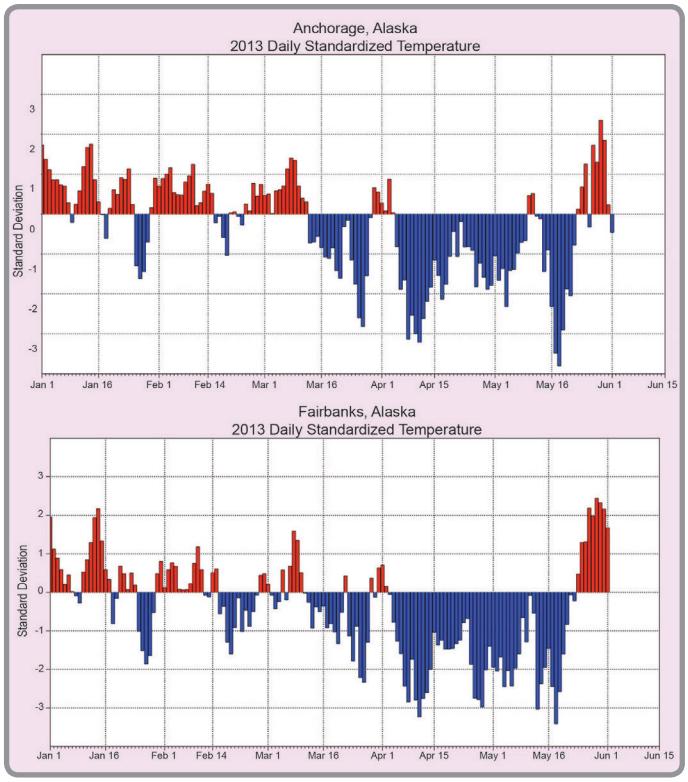
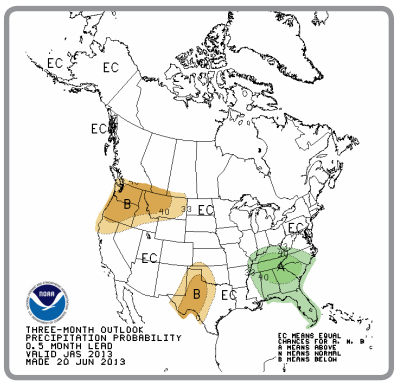
Regional Highlight - *Cool Spring, Late Breakup, Plenty of Flooding*



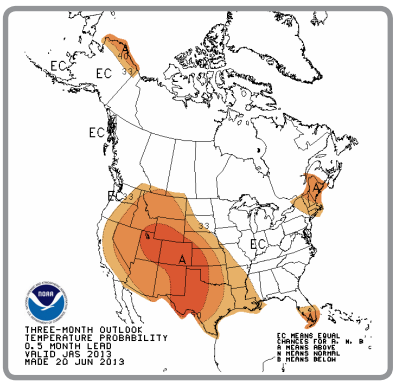


The unseasonably cold temperatures from April extended (with a short reprieve on the 9th and 10th) well into May. Above-normal mean statewide temperatures returned on the 23rd, and stayed until the end of the month. The mean temperature of all first order stations for May was 39.9°F, 3.1°F below the long-term mean of 43.0°F. Eighteen of the 20 First Order Stations reported negative deviations, with Interior and Western stations reporting the most extreme deviations from their expected temperatures. Bettles topped the list with a significant negative deviation of -8.2°F. Following Bettles were: Bethel (-6.6°F), Nome (-5.7°F), Kotzebue (-5.5°F), and Fairbanks (-5.1°F). Barrow reported the largest positive deviation of 1.6°F, followed by Annette with 1.2°F. Fairbanks had its first 50°F day on May 8, for a total of 215 days since that temperature had last been reached. This is the fifth longest stretch of under 50°F days for Fairbanks in more than 100 years. For Nome, the first 40°F day was reached on the 25th, for a total of 224 days below 40°F.

Regional - *Outlook for Summer 2013*



The Climate Prediction Center's 3-month forecast for the July-August-September period for Alaska calls for above normal chances of warmer than normal chances for the North Slope of Alaska and equal chances of normal temperatures elsewhere. Equal chances of normal precipitation are forecast statewide.



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Alaska Region Partners

Alaska Center for Climate Assessment and Policy
www.accap.uaf.edu

Alaska Climate Research Center
http://climate.gi.alaska.edu/

Alaska Climate Science Center
http://www.doi.gov/csc/alaska/index.cfmg

Cryosphere Today (University of Illinois)
http://arctic.atmos.uiuc.edu/cryosphere/

NOAA/NWS Weather Forecast Offices in Fairbanks, Anchorage, and Juneau

NOAA/NESDIS/NCDC
www.ncdc.noaa.gov

Scenarios Network for Alaska and Arctic Planning
www.snap.uaf.edu

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